

Claims:

- 1     1.     A spa assembly comprising:  
2             a shell portion including a tub portion, a flat upper flange, and an integral spillway,  
3     and shaped to be fitted into an existing gunite spa cavity, with the flat upper flange being  
4     constructed so as to support the weight of the spa on the rim of the gunite spa cavity; and  
5             plumbing elements associated with the shell portion, including at least one suction  
6     and one return.
  
- 1     2.     The spa assembly of claim 1 wherein the shell portion has a notch in the transition  
2     area between the tub portion and the flat upper flange, wherein the notch is sized so as to  
3     receive masonry components comparable to those to be placed on the top surface of the flat  
4     upper flange.
  
- 1     3.     The spa assembly of claim 2 wherein the notch has dimensions from between four to  
2     six inches in height to one to two inches in depth.
  
- 1     4.     The spa assembly of claim 1 wherein the shell portion includes a vacuum-formed  
2     base part and a layer of fiberglass.
  
- 1     5.     The spa assembly of claim 4 wherein the vacuum-formed base part is constructed  
2     from a material selected from the group consisting of acrylic, plastic, Lucite, resin  
3     composite, and carbon fiber.

1     6.     The spa assembly of claim 1 wherein the shell portion is constructed so as to be  
2     readily insertable and removable from the existing gunite spa cavity.

1     7.     The spa assembly of claim 1 wherein the suction includes at least one main drain  
2     suction, located near the bottom of the shell portion.

1     8.     The spa assembly of claim 1, wherein operating controls are located in a single,  
2     readily accessible window region.

1     9.     A spa assembly comprising:  
2             a shell portion including a tub portion, a flat upper lip having a top surface, and an  
3     integral spillway; and  
4             plumbing elements associated with the shell portion, including at least one suction  
5     and one return;  
6             wherein the shell portion is shaped so that it may be readily installed into an existing  
7     gunite spa cavity, with the flat upper lip being constructed so as to allow flat masonry  
8     components to be laid/installed directly onto the top surface.

1     10.    The spa assembly of claim 9, wherein the assembly is capable of being installed in a  
2     balanced manner, supported by both the flat upper lip and the bottom footwell, without the  
3     use of sandbags.

1 11. The spa assembly of claim 10, wherein the assembly is capable of being attached to  
2 an upper rim of the gunite spa cavity by securing elements.

1 12. The spa assembly of claim 11, wherein the securing elements are bolts.

1 13. The spa assembly of claim 11, wherein the securing elements are twist-lock  
2 fasteners.

1 14. The spa assembly of claim 12, wherein the securing elements travel directly down  
2 through the upper lip and attach to the gunite spa cavity.

1 15. The spa assembly of claim 9 wherein the shell portion has a notch in the transition  
2 area between the tub portion and the flat upper lip, wherein the notch is sized so as to  
3 receive masonry components comparable to those to be placed on the top surface of the flat  
4 upper lip.

1 16. The spa assembly of claim 15 wherein the notch has dimensions from between four  
2 and six inches in height to one to two inches in depth.

1 17. The spa assembly of claim 9 wherein the shell portion includes a vacuum-formed  
2 base part and fiberglass.

1 18. The spa assembly of claim 17 wherein the vacuum-formed base part is constructed  
2 from a material selected from the group consisting of acrylic, plastic, Lucite, resin-based  
3 composites, and carbon fiber.

1 19. The spa assembly of claim 18 wherein the suction includes at least one main drain  
2 suction, located near the bottom of the shell portion.

1 20. The spa assembly of claim 9, wherein operating controls are located in a single,  
2 readily accessible window region.

1 21. The spa assembly of claim 9, wherein the spa assembly is pre-plumbed and all of the  
2 basic plumbing controls are located in a single, readily accessible window region.

1 22. A spa assembly comprising:  
2 a shell portion including a tub portion, a flat upper lip, and an integral spillway,  
3 shaped so that it may be readily inserted into an existing gunite spa cavity; and  
4 plumbing elements associated with the shell portion, including at least one suction  
5 and one return;  
6 wherein the shell portion has a notch in the transition area between the tub portion  
7 and the flat upper lip, which is sized so as to receive masonry components that provide a  
8 matching, transition zone allowing the desired masonry to extend seamlessly into the water  
9 line.

1    23.    The spa assembly of claim 22 wherein the shell portion includes a vacuum-formed  
2    base part and fiberglass.

1    24.    A method of making a spa comprising:  
2           providing a base having a flat upper lip;  
3           applying fiberglass material to the base;  
4           installing plumbing, including at least one suction and one return, in association with  
5    the base; wherein the base, the fiberglass and the plumbing define an assembly; and  
6           applying insulating material to the assembly.

1    25.    The method of claim 24 wherein the base is vacuum-formed.

1    26.    A method of making a spa comprising:  
2           providing a base having a flat upper lip and an integral spillway;  
3           applying fiberglass material to the base;  
4           installing plumbing, including at least one suction and one return, in association with  
5    the base, wherein the base, the fiberglass and the plumbing define an assembly; and  
6           applying insulating material to the assembly.

1    27.    The method of claim 26 wherein the base is vacuum-formed.

1    28.    A method of making a spa comprising:

2 providing a base having a flat upper lip and a water line, wherein the base possesses  
3 no orifices within the top eight inches of a water line for the purpose of acting as a skimmer;  
4 applying fiberglass material to the base;  
5 installing plumbing, including at least one suction and one return, in association with  
6 the base; wherein the base, the fiberglass and the plumbing define an assembly; and  
7 applying insulating material to the assembly.